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THE POWERFUL BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

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Malorie Mackey is an actress, host, and writer living in Los Angeles, CA. Malorie's first book was published in 2017 and her short story "What Love Has Taught Me" has been published in the anthology "Choices." You can find Malorie's travel content on dozens of digital media platforms. Check out www.maloriesadventures.com for more. Malorie's adventures don't just encompass physical adventures. She has been a student of intuition since she was a teenager, studying at Edgar Cayce's A.R.E. In 2019, Malorie discovered the Monroe Institute while filming her travel show. Since then, she has been studying the art and science of consciousness through many different programs and life experiences.

We've spoken about mindfulness before, and I'm sure we'll speak about it again. Mindfulness is not only a trending topic in the world of meditation, but it's also a heavily researched scientific study and an essential tool to utilize alongside your Monroe meditations. In recent studies, the benefits of mindfulness have been found to include reduced anxiety and stress, improved immune response, lowered blood pressure, increased attention, improved cognition, increased memory retention, and less depression and emotional reactivity. It's become a pivotal tool for many therapists in their work, as well. The benefits provided in these studies are making tremendous waves in the field of mental health.

Let's discuss a bit of the logic behind the research before we expand more on how mindfulness can help your meditation. Researchers have theorized that mindfulness teaches you how to pay better attention by enhancing your focus, which helps to grow your cognitive abilities and keep you more present in the moment, thereby strengthening your attention span. If you're more present in your daily life, your mind is better stimulated, which also helps with other factors such as memory retention.

Some studies show a decrease in depression. The reasoning here is if you are experiencing the current moment more openly, you are also likely experiencing it less judgmentally, as you are focusing solely on present environmental factors. By doing this, you can effectively rid yourself of the societal stressors that may be weighing on you, which can help decrease feelings of anxiety and depression. Lower stress and anxiety generally mean lowered blood pressure which can also mean an increased immune response.

In other words, the more you are in the present moment experiencing each and every sensation, the less likely you are living in your head and judging either yourself or those around you. It's a well-studied and proven example of mind over matter that shows where you focus your attention can affect both your mental and physical health—at least to some degree.

How does this help us with our meditation? Tremendously! As stated above, mindfulness helps keep you in the present moment and out of your head. It stops you from judging yourself which interferes with your meditation exercises. A critical mindset can throttle your creativity and feed self-limiting beliefs. This is why I attempt a quick mindfulness exercise before any meditation I do. I'll pinpoint the exercise I want to use in the Expand app, and then I'll take five to ten minutes to practice mindfulness. I'll get comfortable in the spot in which I'm going to meditate and focus on relaxing in the present moment. I'll focus first on my breath, feeling it physically rise and fall. Next, I'll focus on each section of my body, relaxing it in turn. I'll pay attention to the sounds I hear around me before moving on to see how I'm feeling emotionally. Once I feel present in the moment on a deep level, I'll start my Expand exercise.

I find this keeps me out of my head and in a nonjudgmental state so that I can be as open and creative in my exercise as possible. To me, this is the most important benefit of mindfulness, as it relates to meditation.